



NEWS FROM

Congressman

STEVE BUYER

200 Capitol Office Building • Washington, DC 20515 • 202/225-5001



Serving the
Counties of:

BENTON
BLACKFORD
CARROLL
CASS
FULTON
GRANT
HOWARD
JASPER
KOSCIUSKO
LAKE
MARSHALL
MIAMI
NEWTON
PORTER
PULASKI
STARKE
VERMILLION
WABASH
WARREN
WHITE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 8, 1997

CONTACT: Maureen Cragin

Ryan Vaart

(202) 225-2539

**STATEMENT OF HONORABLE STEVE BUYER
CHAIRMAN, MILITARY PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE**

HEARING ON REVIEW OF GENERAL AND FLAG OFFICER AUTHORIZATIONS

April 8, 1997

Today's hearing is an outgrowth of the fiscal year 1997 Defense Authorization Act increase in Marine Corps general officer authorizations and the statutory mandate for the Department of Defense to reassess its general and flag officer requirements and report the results to Congress by late March of this year.

As I understand it, the Department's study is finished and draft recommendations have been developed. However, the Secretary of Defense has decided not to submit either the report or any recommended changes to existing general and flag officer authorizations until after the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) process is finished. That presumably will be sometime later this year, and informally we have been told that no request for increases will be sought until at least the FY 1999 Defense Authorization Act.

While I can, in part, empathize with the Department's desire to delay formal requests for changes to general and flag officer authorizations until after the QDR, I do not understand the reluctance to submit a report to Congress which details the process, methodology and underlying rationale used by DOD and the services, particularly since this same methodology, process and rationale will be applied to QDR-revised force structure and staffing patterns. Until this subcommittee fully understands the process, methodology

Steve Buyer
100 East Wacker Drive, Suite 1600 • Chicago, Illinois 60601 • (312) 437-4381
200 North Dearborn Street • Indianapolis, IN 46204 • (317) 635-6333

I N D I A N A ' S 5 T H D I S T R I C T

Printed on Recycled Paper with Soy Inks

and rationale behind DOD's recommendations, I believe it will be reluctant to grant increases in current authorizations. Beyond that, the legislation also called for the Department to address significant issues related to active and reserve general officers that went beyond the issue of adequacy of numbers. Therefore, I will formally ask that the Secretary of Defense deliver to Congress, as required by law, the report specified by section 1213, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997.

In the absence of a written report, I see today's hearing as a step towards gaining insight into the DOD study. In addition, today's hearing is an opportunity for DOD to receive and discuss Congressional and General Accounting Office concerns with the process and methodology in order that changes might be made and applied as part of the post-QDR effort.

Finally, I see today's hearing as an opportunity to explore one of the reasons behind what I would assume would be DOD's ultimate recommendation for some increases in the current limits on active and reserve component general and flag officers. As articulated by the Marine Corps last year, the fundamental reason for the need to increase the numbers of general and flag officers was: The unconstrained growth in the numbers of joint and external general and flag officer requirements, and the growing need for services to fill those positions, has left the services – whose available pool of general and flag officers is tightly constrained — unable to fill both the external and in-service requirements.

So today I would also like to spend some time examining the issue of the growth in the joint and external general officer requirements as an engine that is driving up the service needs for more general and flag officers.

Before I introduce the first witness panel, I would offer Mr. Taylor the opportunity to make any opening remarks he desires.

PANEL 1:

Our first panel today comes from the General Accounting Office. Congress mandated that GAO be involved in the review, but I want to publicly acknowledge my thanks to the Secretary of Defense for fully and openly including the GAO in the process. That openness was not without some risk, but, I believe, will ultimately pay dividends for the department.

Our first witness is:

Mark Gebicke
Director, Military Operations and Capabilities Issues
National Security and International Affairs Division.

He is accompanied by:

Dr. William Beusse
Assistant Director, Military Operations & Capabilities Issues, and

Mr. Brian Lepore
Senior Evaluator, Military Operations and Capabilities Issues.

PANEL 2:

The second panel today represents the Department of Defense. The principal witnesses are:

The Honorable Frederick Pang
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management Policy, and

Mr. Terrence O'Connell
Chairman, Reserve Forces Policy Board

They are accompanied by:

Lieutenant General Frederick Vollrath
Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, U.S. Army

Vice Admiral Daniel T. Oliver
Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Manpower, Personnel and Training, U.S. Navy

Lieutenant General Carol Mutter
Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, U.S. Marine Corps

Lieutenant General Michael McGinty
Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel
U.S. Air Force

Major General Stephen Rippe
Vice Director, Joint Staff